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WM. KNABE & CO.—NEW PIANO-FORTE.

Our piano manufacturers are a most enterprising class of men, they are restless in the pursuit of excellence, and are never content from month to month, unless they have achieved some step in advance of the point last attained. One would have supposed that Knabe & Co. would have remained contented with their position, for beside the hold they have in this section of the country, they have most potent sway over the West and South-west. There their instruments, are in such imperative demand that, although they turn out in their vast factory in Baltimore, between thirty and forty pianos per week, they are rarely ever able to meet their orders in full. They have, however, already commenced another wing to their present immense establishment, which will give them room to manufacture between fifty and sixty pianos per week.

The latest improvement effected by Knabe & Co. is one of unquestionable importance, for it elucidates a principle which has long been discussed. It consists in placing the points of contact between the strings and the wrest plank, upon metal bearings exclusively. In other instruments the strings rest partly on wood and partly upon iron, an arrangement calculated to produce a difference in the quality of the tone, and consequently an inequality in the scale. This metal is firmly fixed between the wrest plank and the iron plate by bolts passing through all, and the whole is rendered more compact by the immense strain caused by the bearings of the strings.

There can be nothing more firm and solid than this arrangement presents, and the result is positive and manifest to all, in the increase of power gained, and in a certain depth and solidity of tone, which will stand the greatest possible enforcement, without wavering or yielding in the slightest degree. We have tested the results of this improvement by comparing the same class of instruments, with and without the patent improvement, and we find those pianos with the metallic bearings have a richer, rounder, firmer, and more brilliant tone; that the power is vastly increased, and that in sympathetic tone and prolongation of sound, they are unsurpassed by any instruments and equalled by very few. It is well known that the former instruments of Knabe & Co. were admirable in every respect, but the new instruments are head and shoulders higher in excellence, and are in the front rank of the best pianos in the country.

Wm. Knabe & Co. are manufacturing Grand Pianos on the same principle, and if the application of the principle improves their present fine Grands in the same ratio that it has their Squares, they will make our great makers at home "stand round," and successfully dispute with them the supremacy of the Concert-room.

SOIREES OF CHAMBER MUSIC.—The twelfth season of the Soirees of Chamber Music, commenced last month. We regret not being present at the first Soiree, but not having received our tickets, by some accident, the date of performance slipped from our memory. The second Soiree takes place on Thursday evening next, March 7th, at Steinway Hall. All the old and favorite artists will appear, namely, William Mason, Theodore Thomas, J. Mosenthal, G. Matzka and F. Bergner. The programme is not yet announced, but it will no doubt be of its usual excellence.

ORATORIO OF "SAMSON."—On Wednesday evening Handel's fine oratorio "Samson," will be given at Steinway Hall on Wednesday evening March 6th. Madame Parepa will appear, together with Mr. George Simpson and Mr. J. R. Thomas. There will be a grand orchestra with the organ, and the choruses will be sustained by the Harmonic and St. Cecilia Societies. Another overwhelming audience may be expected on this occasion.

MARRIAGE OF MADAME PAREPA AND CARL ROSA.—This much talked of event, took place at the residence of the Rev. Dr. Stephen H. Tyng, on Tuesday, February the 26th. The charming songstress, Madame Parepa Carvell, on that day made Carl Rosa of Hamburg, the talented violinist, the master of her destiny. It is well that two such harmonious souls should be wedded, and let us hope that their lives may be as harmonious as their art.

SUNDAY EVENING CONCERTS.—Mr. Harrison presents a grand programme for his Twenty-Sixth Sunday Concert, to-morrow evening. The popular and delightful artiste Madame Parepa will appear, together with Carl Rosa, Mr. Mills and Thomas' Orchestra. The mere announcement will throng Steinway Hall, to its utmost capacity.

MATTERS THEATRIC.

No one who has never been a Dramatic Critic can thoroughly appreciate the miseries attending the life of that estimable member of society, I say this calmly and with premeditation, without the slightest fear of contradiction, after much thought and at the expense of a considerable quantity of what, in olden times, was "midnight oil," but in this more enlightened age is "midnight gas." Not that I would have you for one instant imagine that this statement is, to use a vulgarism, "gas"—far from it—it is a stern and painful truth which needs but the test to be found correct. To silence all doubt, allow me to show you why this statement is not "gas." Webster tells us that "gas" is a permanently elastic aeriform fluid, or a substance reduced to the state of an aeriform fluid by its permanent connection with caloric—surely the statement in question cannot be defined under that head. Slang tells us that "gas" is something which is not true, braggadocio, romance and bombast. Decidedly and emphatically the statement in question does

not come under that head. As neither of the definitions given above in any way explain the statement in question, out of sheer justice you must sweet reader, set it down as truth, and "truth crushed to earth"—well, you know the rest.

Having settled the question of veracity, to my own satisfaction at least, permit me to explain to you a few of the miseries and anxieties of the Dramatic Critic.

In the first place his duties have upon him a Pythagorean effect; transforming him from a quiet respectable American citizen and voter into a bird, and not only into a bird but a bird of the night, that most dismal of all birds—an owl. He is denied the privilege of being a reputable bird of the day, a bluejay, sparrow, tom-tit or canary, but must perforce blink through the streets at dark and perch upon his orchestra chair with other owly brethren of the press who blink with him in the evening and hoot with him in the morning papers.

In the second place he must grind out an article at given periods, weekly, semi-weekly or daily—it matters not what he has to write about, write he must, and write he does—the column is filled, ink suffers, and so do his readers.

Thus your critic is transformed, I was about to say, into a musical instrument; but even that honor is denied him, for this constant grinding reduces his writing to the level of a hurdy-gurdy, and remorselessly hurls it from the exalted position of a hand organ.

In the third place he must be a constant searcher after novelty, and in these days when a play is tolerably certain to "run" for three or four weeks he finds this a scarce commodity. This may all be very pleasant to authors and managers, but it is ruin, destruction, and death to the Dramatic Critic.

So having been Pythagorised, and hurdy-gurdyised, he incontinently perishes, in a literary point of view, from lack of stimulants, otherwise Novelty. Is not his case a sad one? Does not the sympathising tear drop full upon this heart-rending recital of his woes?—But, no: the subject is too fraught with misery to be treated lightly; let him blink and grind, grind and blink until his literary race is run, and he departs to that home, where even dramatic critics are happy, the country, and recuperates his exhausted energies during the Summer months, in preparation for his blinking and grinding campaign of the Winter. But even this comfort is denied the Dramatic Critic—the managers have their eyes open to business, and the Dramatic Owl must blink his over their futile attempts. The immortal Irish Drama flourishes throughout the Summer, and the immortal Irish Drama must be written about—blink on, unhappy owl, for thee there is no rest, for thee no happiness on earth!

Perhaps this rambling and disjointed article may somewhat astonish thee, delightful reader, perhaps you may inquire what particular connection there is between it and "Matters Theatric?" Upon my word I cannot tell you, but as it is placed under the head of "Matters Theatric," it must, as a natural consequence, be "Matters Theatric." A word in your ear, however—at the theatres there is nothing new, nothing to write

about; so, after blinking in an orchestra chair for several evenings, the idea suddenly struck me that the readers of the *Art Journal* might, perhaps, like to hear something of the manners and habits of the critical owl. "Matters Ornithological" might have been a fitter heading to the article, but "Matters Theatric" must be filled, so "to do a great right I have done a little wrong," and if any of my readers are bored or offended, I can but beg their pardons and promise to be in future a less rambling, less stupid, and less ornithological.

SHUGGE.

IN MEMORIAM.

Although the tears are dried
That fell upon thy grave,
And we have learned that He
May take away, who gave,
Thy memory still is green,
In our hearts still it lives,
But He whose mercy took thee hence
A soothing solace gives.

Solace for loss of thee,
Who wert so pure and true,
Whose presence lightened all our homes,
And over all things threw
The sunshine of thy gentle heart,
In which each Christian grace
Welled up, and shed a radiance
Of beauty o'er thy face.

Solace for loss of one
Whom we so mourn in vain,
In that sweet hope of Christian hearts,
That we shall meet again.
Thou hast but passed before
The road that we must go,
A path which trodden by the just,
Leaves every grief below.

The day comes back again
On which we closed thine eyes,
And crushed the bursts of sorrow down,
Repressed the thronging sighs.
We felt from out of all our life
A light for ever gone!—
In that dread stillness might be heard
Our heart-beats, one by one

And with this day returns
The memories of thy youth,
The thousand loving, graceful charms,
Thy purity and truth.
Thy fine and ready wit,
Thy fancy free and bright,
That brought out all, the beautiful
And pure, in sunny light.

Thy winning, fluent tongue,
Unto whose accents we
Have often listened, spell-bound,
In half idolatry.
All the day recalls,
As though we heard thy voice,
Whose rounded tones of melody
Made all you loved rejoice.

And with these charms of mind,
And faultless form and face,
Comes back a sweeter memory,
Than outward mould or grace:
The knowledge of thy goodness,
In thought, in act, in deed;
The charity which gave to all
The full and cordial meed.

The open hand and heart,
The love so true to all,
We scarce can wonder that the Lord
Should utter thy recall!
The loss to us is—all?—
And on thy grave we lay
The offerings of our loving hearts,
Which flow to thee alway.

Sept. 24th, 1866.

HENRY C. WATSON.

CORRESPONDENCE.

BALTIMORE, Md, Feb. 25th, 1867.

Ed. Art Journal,

DEAR SIR:—We have had considerable music here lately, fair success has attended every effort, while some have been brilliant in their results. To those who know how to manage things, our City would prove a rich mine to enterprising and responsible concert givers. We have had a good many singers from New York here lately. Miss Nettie Sterling appeared recently, and her grand voice was greatly admired. Mr. George Simpson, one of your best tenors, is an immense favorite in Baltimore, and specially attractive, both in public and private, if we may believe current reports, which seems to fix upon him a happy destiny, wherein beauty and wealth figure prospectively.

The Ladies' Southern Relief Association gave a grand concert at the Concordia, on Thursday the 21st inst. The storm here was terrible; but, nevertheless, the beautiful hall was well filled by an intelligent and elegant company. The attractions were, Madame Varian Hoffman, from New York, Theodore Hableman, the Misses Daniel, and Mr. V. W. Caulfield, pianist.

Mme. Varian Hoffman delighted every one by her pure, clear, bright and melodious soprano voice, which she uses with such artistic skill, taste, and refinement. Her singing was received with warm enthusiasm, accompanied by floral honors, and all she did was heartily encored. Mme. Varian Hoffman adds to her delightful vocal powers, grace of person, and the charm of exquisite dressing, a rare combination which cannot fail to make her popular wherever she appears. We have rarely heard anything more fascinating than Mme. Hoffman's ballad singing. The Misses Daniels are very charming singers, with pure, fresh voices, of large compass, and excellent quality. They sing in an artistic manner, and throw much sentiment and expression into their songs. We think they would make their mark even in New York. They received a full share of applause and encores.

Theodore Hableman is the best operatic concert singer that we have heard; he understands the difference between the concert-room and the stage, and his success is consequently unerring. He made quite a sensation, and carried the audience with him. Mr. Caulfield played in his usual graceful and flowing manner, and accompanied very well indeed. I understand that the Ladies

have determined to repeat this Concert, after Lent, and that the same artists will be engaged.

The concert for the Orphan Asylum on Saturday evening last, was a good money success, but was musically a comparatively failure. There was one point, however, that excited universal admiration, and that was the new Grand Piano forte manufactured by Wm. Knabe & Son of this city. It is one of the most brilliant instruments I ever heard. It has immense power through the whole compass; the tone is pure and ringing, and is what we term melodious and sympathetic, and its prolongation of tone is quite remarkable. I am satisfied, and it is the general opinion here, that the Knabe Grand is fully the equal of your much boasted Chickering or Steinway Grand pianos. I believe in a fair trial they would stand at the head. You will soon hear some in New York when you can judge for yourself.

Yours,

W. R. M.

MUSICAL GOSSIP.

Some musical writers in Milan object strongly to Ullman's extensive posters and excessive flourish about his Patti concerts there, styling him, for such *outré* proceedings, the new Barnum.

They liked Vieuxtemps very much, praised Aptommas's harp playing but disliked his extravagant manner, commended Mme. Krebs' pianism and Batta's cello playing. To Carlotta Patti talent for *lours de force* is alone conceded by them, and the large audiences present are deemed to be attracted by curiosity to hear such vocal exploits.

Wagner has returned to Munich.

Wachtel is said to have engaged at L'Academie—Paris—for thirty performances during the season.

Adelina Patti concluded last month her brilliant engagement at Les Italiens, her last performance being in "La Gazza Ladra." Her performance of French song during the music lesson of "Il Barbieri" is commented upon by Parisian critics with marked diversity of judgment, some declaring her French good and she qualified for a high position in L'Opera Comique, while others assert that she fell short of Marie Cabel's excellent performance, especially in spirit and *brio*, while her pronunciation of French was really so bad as to excite ridicule.

She is asserted to be engaged from March 1st by Merelli for his Italian Opera, removed from Warsaw to St. Petersburg, for a brief season in that capital and brilliant close of Italian Opera there.

The very fastidious opera public of Venice found in "Matilda di Schabran," with Tiberini and wife, Beneventano, Fioravanti, Caraciolo and Poli-Lenzi as principals, something to admire or receive pleasantly. Such a novel sensation was therefore fully enjoyed and hissing or uncouth noise gave place to acclamations of delight and satisfaction.

Italian Opera will go on at Vienna next season as in the last. Engagements for it have been generally signed, Calzolari alone hesitating in hope of getting some better *locals*.

Mehul's "Joseph in Egypt" had good estimation with Viennese dilettanti, when recently performed at the Court Theatre.

Abert's "Columbus" symphony is said to have made great effect when performed at the second subscription concert in Darmstadt, and the second and third movements were especially admired.

Michel Beer's "Struense" with Meyerbeer's illustrative music, produced a decided sensation at Aix la Chapelle, with Kurz in the principal role.